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Man and his Creator

BEING A REVIEW OF THE BIBLE ACCOUNT OF THE CREATION AND A REFUTATION OF THE THEORY OF THE FALL OF MAN

S·J·RHOADS M·D·

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MAN AND HIS CREATOR

BEING A REVIEW OF THE

Bible Account of the Creation and a Refutation of the Theory of the Fall of Man

BY

S. J. RHOADS, M.D.

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TO

ELIZABETH MORTON RHOADS,

MY MOTHER,

who now lives at the town of Greenville, Kentucky, aged 93, wno has for three-fourths of a century been a faithful soldier of the Immanuel Jesus, a member of the Missionary Baptist Church; to whom the author owes much of his early training in many ways, and especially as a student of the Bible; as a slight token of the love and esteem he has for her, this book is affectionately dedicated.

SOLOMON J. RHOADS.

Beaver Dam, Ky., Dec. 12th, 1901.

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PREFACE.

THAT the twentieth century should be hampered by such a revolting theory in reading and construing the teachings of the Bible as is involved in what is called "The fall of Man theory," and foisted upon us by the clergy of almost the entire Christendom is to the writer astonishing beyond measure.

To counteract such a baneful and misleading theory, that not only tends to discredit the Holy Scriptures, but to bring the reverence we should bear to our Creator as a just judge and a gracious God into disrepute, this little volume is published.

The author lays no claim to any special revelation for what is here written, nor does he allege originality for all that is here written. Only this, and nothing more, does he claim,

that, in the interest of truth as the grace of God has enabled him to free himself from traditional bias to read and construe what he does read as a rational being.

The writer knows full well that such a departure from what has been heretofore received as the teachings of the Bible is well calculated to bring down upon him the shafts of adverse criticism, thick and fast. It is what the independent thinker has always had to endure, so let them come as the opponents of these views may feel disposed to formulate them. Already a D.D. has told the writer that he should be ashamed of himself for "uttering such heretical absurdities," with such a vicious visage as to suggest the Inquisition of but a few centuries in the past. Thank God, that the true progress of the Christian religion, as revealed and exemplified by His Son Jesus, has relegated into the eternal past, the bitter persecutions that formerly accompanied the charge of heresy.

I desire to assure every reader of this little volume that, while it may evince a radical de-

parture from what he may in the past have considered as the true teaching of God's word as it may have come to his comprehension, that there is nothing herein that should in the least detract from the reverence he may have for the Bible as the word of God, or for the Bible's Jehovah as the Creator of his (man's) existence. But to the contrary, it should add to the respect and reverence the reader may have for both in disabusing his mind of that monstrous and erroneous idea that God has been, and is still, visiting upon the human race curses in the shape of death, sickness, with all the discomforts mortality is subject to, for the past six thousand years. It will also disabuse the reader's mind of that erroneous notion he may have, that it was woman that took the initiative and led in the downward course that brought misery and woe upon the race; but, instead, she took the initiative and has continued to lead in the upper and better way; that opens the eyes of our understanding, thereby making it possible that the likeness and imagery of our Cre-

ator may expand and develop until spiritually we may become the "Sons of God," as the true pattern given to us by His Son Jesus, exemplified in His life, death and resurrection, two thousand years ago.

That this little contribution to the literature pertaining to the Bible as the word of God may awaken an interest therein, some that shall lead to much good in the better understanding of its teaching, is the sincere desire and prayer of the author. There is much of the first part of the book of Genesis that is allegorical and highly figurative, and in our endeavors to get at the truth that is intended to be conveyed by the author, we should always remember that we are rational beings, and that as such we should endeavor to use our God-given faculties to the best of our abilities in unraveling the thread of our history through the mystery periods of man's earliest career.

THE AUTHOR.

MAN AND HIS CREATOR.

I.

THE BIBLE.

THERE comes to the human race of the present century, from the remotest ages of this world's history, a book, known as the Bible (*τα βιβλία*, in Greek, the book of books). To this people of this century it is, or should be, a most interesting book, in that it gives them the only account from whence they are and whither they are tending. It tells also from whence came the earth upon which they live, and constructs that ever dear place to all civilized humanity known as Home. Without this book the past would be an unraveled skein of traditional

chimera. The future a chaos of riotous imaginations without chart or compass for our guidance. To the human race of the twentieth century it should be prized above all other books as being the lamp that is to guide them through the life they are called upon to live on this mundane sphere.

Whence came this book and what constitutes its authority among the human race are, therefore, very pertinent questions for our consideration.

A casual inspection will soon reveal that it is a book gathered together from a number of authors, the majority of whom purport to write from inspiration, given to them by the infinite God of whom they write, and of His dealings with mankind about whom they write, whether of the past contemporaneously, or in the future from their time of existence. The others giving satisfactory evidence of having done the same, by what they write, as well as contiguous circumstances connected therewith.

Its authority is chiefly based upon the claim

whether or not did these writers, of a truth, write by or through the guidance of an influence that came to them through an influence that is so ulterior to their existence as to be known as inspiration, and which, from its import was, and is, considered as being the gift of God through His spirit unto their minds, and by the direction of which influence they wrote what they did write.

To many this forms a very great stumbling block, yet it is a question that should be settled like all other questions, upon a preponderance of evidence.

A few of the most pointed and tangible of these will now be noted. Not all, by any means, for that would extend this chapter into a volume.

The first clause of the second verse of the first chapter of Genesis reads thus: "And the earth was without form and void." This was written over four thousand years ago, long before the revelations of the science of astronomy had demonstrated, as it has in the last few

years, that the earth in its remote history actually did exist in this condition.

How could the author of this expression be able to chronicle such an expression without his mind having been inspired to know this fact, by the omniscient Creator Himself? Let the would-be atheist ponder over this problem and give us a satisfactory answer thereto.

In the mind of the author, none can be given that can in the least weaken his faith in the fact that this alone is an undoubtable evidence of the inspiration of the author who wrote it, be he whom he may; if it was not Moses, then some other man, it matters not who, the facts remain the same.

Again, it is said of Nineveh, a once populous city. Let the reader now read the three chapters of the book of Nahum, and then answer was he inspired when he wrote such a terrible prophecy concerning such a great city.

Jeremiah said of Babylon, as a revelation from Jehovah: "And it shall come to pass when seventy years are accomplished that I will pun-

ish the King of Babylon, and that nation, saith the Lord, for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans, and with it perpetual desolation." (Jer. 25, 12.)

Also read Jeremiah, Chaps. 50 and 51, and answer whether or not in the light of modern history were these prophecies inspired?

Let the reader read the ninth chapter of Amos, beginning at the seventh verse, and read to the end of the chapter, and see how literally this very prophecy is being fulfilled at this very time in regard to the descendants of Jacob, who was called Israel.

Come on down to the time of Jesus the Christ. How literally does the condition of Capernaum now answer the prediction made concerning it. (See Luke 10, 15, and Matthew 11, 23.)

Let these references suffice, for, with the fair minded and unbiased, they will certainly be sufficient for the purpose of convincing them that these writings come by revelation through inspiration of their authors.

To read is one thing, to understand what you read is often an entirely different thing. He who reads anything with a mind already preoccupied as to what is being read very often reads to no purpose whatever, in comprehending what he does read. The proper way to read anything as far as within the power of the reader lies, is to read as though you had never read that before then; if it has been read before, go back over the same with the previous interpretation, and if they differ, weigh them in your mind and conclude which is the most rational to your intelligence. In this way, and in no other, can it be expected for the truth of what you read to be comprehended.

In reading and speaking concerning the Bible as to what it teaches or does not teach we often hear or read of something that is said to be supernatural. To one who holds, as the author does, that God, the great and universal Creator, is the author of all things and all laws relative thereto for their government, such words are entirely superlative and meaningless,

and should be entirely discontinued. If man has a conception in regard to matters not in harmony with the laws of the Creator, that does not warrant the assumption that there is another creative force to be known and designated as nature, or the laws of nature, for there is no such thing, and the error lies in man's conception alone. The central theme of the whole Bible is Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ, the founder of the Christian religion. In the Old Testament, from Genesis to Malachi, indisputable references are made relative to His coming, and relative to His missions. Especially rich and forcible are these references made by David in the Psalms; and the great prophet Isaiah.

The New Testament gives the account of the coming, the life, ministry, death, resurrection and ascension of this same Jesus.

The one great purpose of it all is to reveal to Man that he is a sinner, and then reveal unto him his only avenue of escape, punishment for his sins. We are told in this book that

there is no other name given under Heaven to save us from the effects of our sins, save this same Jesus.

Christianity, founded upon the doctrines of Jesus the Christ, has been in vogue in this world for nearly two thousand years. Has it answered the purpose for which it was introduced and promulgated?

These are pertinent questions; what are the answers?

Bad as men are to-day, they are certainly better than when Jesus was in this world engaged in His ministry. The treatment and punishment He received then would be hardly possible now from the world's worst inhabitants. Of the eighteen leading persons engaged in the establishing of Christianity, all save one died as the result of violence, and that one barely escaped (John the Apostle and Evangelist).

If we are to credit contemporaneous history, these were no exception to the rule in those days. It is not so now; a very large majority

of men come to their death as a result of physical laws.

Following the trend of human events as they have come along down to us, like the income of the tide, advancing, then receding, but all the while making progress, the evolution in the life of mankind tends upward as well as onward. This is quite apparent even to a superficial student of history. To some, no doubt, this betterment of the race has not been commensurate with its cost in suffering and energy put in the work of saving mankind from their sins. It is much more likely that these carping critics are not prepared to estimate the value of the work being done, or to appreciate the value of a saved soul in the economy of the Creator's plans.

Christianity is surely making progress. Reader, will you not come and go with us?

II.

THE LORD'S WORDS.

When error is to be combated, the age of the error should not be considered as an excuse for its veneration over any arguments that may be adduced for its refutation, although the error may have held its place for thousands of years in the minds of the people. That the prevailing conclusions in regard to the teachings of the Holy Bible in regard to man's early condition are erroneous and radically so, and, altogether unwarranted by the record given us, when properly construed, is the conclusion of the author of this little volume deduced from a rational and conscientious consideration of the text and contexts upon which the prevailing idea that the Bible teaches the doctrine that

has been formulated therefrom, and known as the "fall of man."

To the earnest seeker for the truth of what he may read, or investigate, it should matter but little what the prevailing opinions may be from tradition, or multiplicity of authors, but what truth do you glean from what you read? That is the question to be decided, and truth alone is to be the ultimate criterion of your conclusions as to whether you are right or wrong. This is the decisive test.

In deducing conclusions it is of prime importance that we start out with correct data from which we are to formulate our conclusions; if we err here we will almost surely build a false theory by our deductions. It is here I shall predicate my objections to the prevailing theory of the fall of man. Now to the record.

"And God said: Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over

all the earth, and every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female, created He them.

"And God blessed them, and said unto them, 'Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth; and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.'" (Gen. 1, 26-29.)

Now, in considering this account, it is of the utmost importance that we make no mistake in regard to what is meant by these terms, "in our image," "after our likeness." To get at this, let us consider what was the subject under consideration: Creation and dominion. These are the subject matter. Clearly defining, over what man was to have dominion. To go beyond the specifications would clearly be unwarranted and gratuitous.

There is nothing of what is known as moral characteristics involved in this account at all. And to lug it in here is making an addition

thereto that will come under the denunciation recorded by John in Rev. 22, 18. So dear reader, let us not make it. Simply abide by the account as it is. We purpose showing soon that man at this time was entirely devoid of the necessary qualities to possess a moral character.

Yes, but the fall of man theorist will say, did not God declare that everything He had made was good? (Gen. 1, 31.) And God saw everything that He had made, and behold, it was very good, and the evening and the morning were the sixth day. Now, to what does the expression "very good" apply? The writer knows full well the very great difficulty that often has to be met in endeavoring to get the exact idea intended to be conveyed, when to get that idea it of necessity must be translated from some remote language; and, laying no claims to being a linguist himself, he will here interpolate Adam Clark's notes, than whom no higher authority can be given short of inspiration:

"Superlatively, or only good; as good as they could be. The plan wise, the work well executed, the different parts properly arranged, their nature limits, models of existence, manner of propagation, habits, mode of sustenance, etc., etc., for everything was formed to the utmost perfection of its nature. So that nothing could be added or diminished without encumbering the operation of matter and spirit on the one hand, or rendering them inefficient to the end proposed on the other; and God has so done all these marvelous works as to be glorified in all, by all, and through all." The author accepts this in its entirety, and believes with Dr. Clark, that in passing his work in review, as it were, we have an expression of satisfaction as to its results. Not in any way delineating the character of man or beast, whether vicious or docile. If a man builds a good house, that of itself is no evidence that the tenant thereof will be good. That is quite a different matter altogether.

To harmonize the Bible account of man's

début upon this mundane sphere we of necessity have to take these views of these different accounts, else how could it be said of man, as it is in Genesis 3, 22: "And the Lord God said, 'Behold the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil.'" Now, kind reader, just be rational right here, and ask yourself if this does not tell of another feature of likeness man has acquired in addition to what was embraced in the first chapter of Genesis? Most assuredly it does. I care not how broad you may make the first. And this last, the most important of all that has come before. It is the phase of likeness that elevates man into a morally responsible being. Who would dare, outside of some priest or preacher, call such an evolution of man's condition "a fall"?

It should go without the saying that the author of Genesis, Chaps. 2-3, has resorted to allegorical and highly figurative methods to impart what information is intended to be conveyed therein. And yet there is some emphatic declaration that will not admit of any doubt

as to its meaning, in Gen. 3, 7, "and their eyes were opened," as a result of their eating the forbidden fruit. Then, again, the statement quoted from Gen. 3, 22. In the first place their understanding was made to comprehend their actual status before their Creator; in the second place, that brought them up on a parallel plane with their Creator, as it relates to the change accomplished thereby.

Mankind was surely led in the upper and better way by the woman who has been traduced for the past six thousand years, as having been the cause of his "fall," and thereby subjecting the race to all the evils concomitant therewith, including that dreadful monster death.

All of which is entirely unwarranted by the account given, and wholly gratuitous upon the part of man, the lord of God's creatures upon this earth. It is a position from which he should make haste to retract, and spend the next six thousand years in craving woman's pardon for this woeful allegation.

There are some who contend that primeval man was so perfect and upright that he would not have been subject to death at all had it not been for this little garden incident. To all such I commend the careful reading of the latter clause of the twenty-second verse of Genesis 3. There he will find enough to put a quietus forever to such an erroneous notion as that.

Man at this age of the world, without the knowledge attained by this garden experience, "the knowledge of good and evil," would be denominated an idiot, a barbarian, preying upon his own progeny, if his personal necessities appeared to require it—a veritable cannibal. And still, if we go to church to hear the Gospel of the Son of Man, Jesus the Christ, the chances are more than even that the preacher will make some allusion to that supremely erroneous notion in regard to these records, and show thereby that he is dominated in his mind by this traditional nonsense.

It is passing strange how slovenly most men

are in their reading, and especially does this pertain to their Bible reading. How frequently have the ears of the reader been greeted with the expression of, "The Star of Bethlehem." Where did they get it? Surely not from the Bible, only by erroneous inference. The star that guided the wise men of the East never went to Bethlehem, and if it had, it would not have found the Child Jesus there. The Apostle Luke tells us where the child was, in the second chapter of his Gospel. He was at Nazareth. Why not say the star of Nazareth, and be more accurate? The exact time of the visit of the magi is not a matter of record, but we have enough incidents recorded to enable us to make a rational surmise in regard to the time. Herod in his diabolical attempt to thwart the purposes of God had all the children of Bethlehem and adjacent countries slain that were under two years of age. So a rational presumption would be about one year after His birth at Bethlehem, taking all the circumstances into consideration.

Man has given him the faculty of reason by his Creator, through the aid of which he is expected to weigh the evidences that are presented to his intellect for his consideration, passing in review, arranging, classifying and harmonizing them with each other, so as to arrive at the truth as it may exist relative to the matter under consideration. He who fails to do this fails to attain to the high degree that is made possible by the grand opportunities given to him as a rational being in the enjoyment of life as he passes this stage of his existence.

The fall of man theory being predicated on an unwarranted construction of these Scriptures, and having no rational basis for its support, must perforce of the circumstances be refused to be entertained by rational beings any longer as a tenet of the Bible, and be relegated to the memories of the past with all the attendant horrors as prerequisite thereto. Just think of such a preposterous idea as a wise and good judge holding the lineage of man accountable

for what his ancestors may have done three hundred generations before.

No, no. Such a Judge cannot be the Christian's God of the twentieth century.

The votary of the fall of man theory will say, what are you going to do with Paul's statement in Romans 5, 12: "Wherefore, as by one man, sin entered into the world, and death by sin: and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." A little rational reflection will, it appears to the author, convince any one that man had to be first elevated to a plane where he could distinguish right from wrong—"know good from evil"—before he could sin; in this way sin entered into the world by or through Adam; being the first of God's creatures upon this earth to attain to that plane. The death referred to clearly alludes to a spiritual death that followed as a sequel to sin, and has no allusion whatever to the death of our mortal bodies. Unless we take this view of this matter we make the serpent the truth teller, as the record shows in the third chapter

of Genesis, which the writer cannot believe for a moment. Again, the last clause of the twenty-second verse of this chapter very clearly gives any one to understand that the privilege of eternal life had not then been attained by the human race, and steps were inaugurated at once that man should not at that time attain to this much desired condition.

The great Creator knows why that was not desirable at that time in man's history. We are not informed by the account that God will forever maintain His cherubim guard to the way of the tree of life. The writer is of the opinion that those who are observing the trend of events, as they relate to the progress being achieved by mind over matter, that there is a possibility, may I not say a probability, that the way to this tree may yet be revealed in the future. Be this as it may, man is certainly still groping in that direction with very considerable progress.

The writer asks the reader to review these passages of Scripture relative to these very im-

portant events connected with the earliest history of his race, as a rational independent thinker, entirely free, if possible, from all traditional bias, or other extraneous influences, and determine for himself whether or not "the fall of man" theory, with all its absurdities, can be rational. So irrational does it appear to the writer, he feels astounded at the idea that such notions could be made to prevail for centuries after centuries, down to the present time. And yet it is true that it is so.

III.

CHRIST THE REDEEMER.

THE advocates of the "fall of man" theory will say, "If there was no fall, why the necessity of a Savior, as personated by the life of Jesus the Christ, the Son of the living God?"

This opens a very important feature in regard to this subject, a true solution of which will go a long way in helping to take a rational view of this matter.

We will endeavor to get at an intelligent comprehension of this subject in a categorical manner.

First, how is it possible for any one to stand in need of a Savior? Manifestly the answer would be, to sin. How can, or do, we sin? Certainly, it is by doing the wrong when we

know what is right, or have an opportunity to know the right, and by wilful negligence refuse to know the right. By no other means is it possible to sin. This is clearly set forth by Paul in Romans 4, 15: "For where no law is, there is no transgression." There can be no law to the babe just born. It must pass into the stage when it can have the knowledge of "good and evil," and then, and not until then, does moral responsibility begin with the individual.

Secondly, would it not be just as essential for mankind to have a Savior or Redeemer for his own personal sins, as that he should have a Savior to redeem him from the consequences of his ancestors' sin? We think so, surely. Rational reflection over this matter will certainly bring us to this conclusion.

Thirdly, to make the life of Jesus effectual in saving us from our sins, it must be a voluntary acceptance and turning unto Him as our Model and Savior personally, and from the effect of our own personal acts. Mother Eve or father Adam having nothing at all to do

in the matter so far as being in any way responsible therefor—it being clearly an individual matter so far as we are concerned.

The importance of a perfect Model, as exemplified in the life of Jesus to lift us up from the pollution of sin, if any difference, being more important without the fall theory than with it; in either case the purpose is the same, and the effect is to bring ourselves into a harmonious relation with the Father. "And if any man sins, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." (I John 2, 1.)

Here is the clear-cut statement that comes from the very best source of information in regard to the import of Jesus as His life relates to ourselves. There is no allusion to Adam here, nor to any of our progenitors. It is "any man," meaning clearly any individual, as the use of the word man is frequently used in the sacred writings, as well as elsewhere.

Man pre-eminently is a religious being. That is, a worshipping being, and to the think-

ing man there is a rational cause for this fact.

For when man looks out from the ego, and tries to contemplate the non-ego, upon any line his attention may be directed, he is so profoundly impressed with truths relative thereto that he cannot escape the conviction that there is beyond the ken of mortal man a cause for all he may or can garner into his conception of these truths.

Intelligent worship must ever tend to the rational phase of that worship. In being a religious creature, man is totally distinct from all other of God's creatures upon this earth. The importance then of being rational in this matter can but be of the utmost importance to each individual in his endeavors to worship his Creator. If there is anything rational in endeavoring to secure an "advocate with the Father" on account of what Adam may have done six thousand years ago, the writer fails to comprehend it, and to him it has the appearance of being irrational in the most extreme sense.

IV.

CHRISTIANITY.

NEARLY two thousand years ago it was announced in the hills of Judea to some shepherds, who were attending their flocks, in a mysterious and wonderful manner the astounding information: "For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, 'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.'" (Luke 2, 11-14.)

This was what is known as the Christian era, ushered in upon all the world, for the

angel expressly stated that this good news was "to all people."

This glorious news was followed by an exemplary life upon the part of Jesus the Christ: through childhood unto mature manhood, after which were a little over three years of wonderful ministry, culminating in the tragic scenes enacted in the capital of Judea, the city of Jerusalem; that rounded out the most perfect life of which man has ever had any account in the whole history of the human race. Was Jesus divine? In any special sense was He the Son of the infinite God? These are the most important questions that have followed along with the record until the twentieth century is upon us. These questions are the most momentous of all questions that are or can be presented to an intelligent rational being. Peter says, as recorded in Acts 4, 12, "Neither is there salvation in any other, for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved"—speaking of Jesus Christ symbolized as the stone rejected by the

builders of the temple. If Peter knew what he was talking about, and we presume he did, he makes this question loom up before us in all its grand significance to all the human race.

Let us compare the beginning of Christianity with its present status in the world. One of the disciples soon after the crucifixion resolved to return to his former avocation, and said: "I go a fishing"; and with him went six other of the twelve; after toiling all night and catching nothing, in the morning the Master appears and inquires if they have any meat. When they answered "No," He directed them to cast their nets on the right side of the ship, "and ye shall find." Having done so, they found their net full of great fishes. Counting them, they were found to number one hundred and fifty-three. Jesus gives them an important lesson for their consideration by asking Peter if he loved them more than He, saying: "Simon Peter, son of Jonas, lovest thou Me more than these?" Repeating this the third time, and with Peter's answer, enjoining upon

him to feed his lambs and sheep. This incident was intended no doubt as a mild reproof to Peter, and those that were with him, for their turning so readily to their former avocations. Be this as it may, the records give us no further proof of such disciplining being at any time thereafter necessary, Peter very soon afterward making his famous effort, on the Pentecostal occasion, as a preacher of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Soon again having the bars of his race prejudices dissipated, whereby his field of usefulness was opened unto the Gentiles through his Cornelian experiences. These are some of the incidents connected with the preaching of the Gospel of Christ by His disciples soon after they received the last commission from their Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

The commission enjoined upon them that they should begin at Jerusalem, (Luke 24, 47), and that "repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem."

Under many vicissitudes and discouraging oppositions, the disciples of Christ have labored along for nearly two thousand years, with varying success, all the while making progress toward the goal of world conquest that was promised them. The achievements of the last year of the last century being one of the most signal of any that has preceded it.

Four of the Christian powers of the world being necessitated to combine in fraternal efforts against the great pagan power of the world, and though their combined population was not half that of the pagan power, yet this stronghold of opposition to the rule of Christianity was humbled and driven from their imperial city and made to sue for peace; which was granted them only on condition that they paid the expenses of the trouble of doing this much deserved work.

Thus passes away before the onward march of a civilization given to the world by Christian influences, a power contemporaneous with the history of the human race; a power that

has been most relentless in its opposition to Christian influences. And as a power in opposition to Christian influences, it is hoped and believed never to be again reinstated. There is an old song that contains this sentiment:

"God moves in mysterious ways,
His wonders to perform."

A potent exhibition of the truth of this sentiment has been wrought out in the events of the far East in the recent past. Christian influences, notwithstanding their seeming retrograde movement at times, are still marching on from conquest to conquest. Like Nebuchadnezzar's dream, as interpreted by Daniel:

"The stone that was cut out of the mountain without hands will not only break to pieces the great image that was emblematical of temporal power, while the kingdom exemplified by the stone that God of Heaven should set up shall break in pieces and consume all other kingdoms." (See Daniel 2.)

Now, kind reader, having gone with me over these views in regard to the teachings of the Bible, the matter will now be left with you, hoping you will, by its perusal, be at least able to free yourself from any traditional bias you may feel in regard to its teachings. Learn to read and meditate over it for the sake of the precious truths that are contained therein, for your upbuilding and betterment in every way. And as the book is given to us to lead us along the lines that are to usher us into a more glorious future life, and to prepare us for that life, our transitory existence here is but its antepast. It is with you, and with you and your Creator alone.

V.

SUPPLEMENTARY CONCLUSIONS.

FIRST. That through a misapprehension of the Mosaic account of man in regard to the import of the words "image" and "likeness" and predicated thereon a very erroneous theory has been formulated, that is quite misleading in regard to succeeding passages of the Scriptures which is commonly known as the "Fall of Man." Now is it not quite singular if such an important feature of these Scriptures is in fact true, that there should be no allusion to that matter in the entire Bible except what is found in Romans 5, 12-21, and in this passage Paul clearly gives the thinking man that the death spoken of here had reference to a spiritual. If that was not so where would come

in the "similitude" mentioned in the fourteenth verse of this Scripture? Is it not a spiritual life we are expected to acquire through Jesus Christ? Paul knew what our latter-day preachers seem not to take in account, viz.: That if we made this allude to Adam's mortal death it would make God the liar, and the serpent the pretty boy, as the literal construction of Gen. 3, 1-7, records the incident. While engaged in preparing this manuscript, the author, at a Sunday school he attends, heard a preacher, in a very good lecture to the boys and girls of the school, in which he endeavored to impart to them at what time they became responsible beings to their Creator, very properly telling them it was when they knew "right from wrong," "good and evil."

He wondered at the time if that preacher would use the same good judgment in preaching to adults as he did to those boys and girls. By chance it was not long before he heard him preach from the text, "A Man of Sorrows"—

Isaiah 53, part of third verse. In this sermon he went off into all the stale nonsense about sin having made a charnel house of this earth, that the theory of the fall is so prolific in begetting.

These preachers are very much given to misconstruing the import of the little "for" in the nineteenth verse of the third of Genesis, making it to signify "by reason of" where the simple import of the verse is to state a fact: "Out of dust wast thou made, therefore unto dust wilt thou return." And this fact being no part of the penalty for disobedience.

How a preacher can construct a "charnel house" out of such material as is here given is a strange matter to the author of this book.

If these preachers who dwell upon "death" and "charnel houses" so much would give a little of their time to the study of God's creatures as they come down to man direct from His hand, they would soon learn that the beasts and fishes and fowls had already made of the earth a charnel house ere Adam's advent, and

man himself had largely contributed to that effect before his eyes were opened to what was going on around him.

Let our preachers give more heed to preaching the Gospel of Christ, who never in His three years of ministry once alluded to the fall of man, that shows up in the record. If they would but do this there would not be so much complaint from them of a lack of interest on the part of the people.

Second. In formulating a theory by which any one wishes to construct a conclusion as to how and why he worships, they should never forget that they are rational beings and endeavor therefore to conform their views therewith. Peter gives us this advice on this line: "But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts; and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear." (I Peter 3, 15.) There certainly can be no other way of getting at an acceptable mode of worship.

There is no paucity of reasons why intelli-

gent beings should become Christians at this age of the world, but it is sure your reasons in this matter must have the proper motive underlying your actions.

That man is a "fallen being" is not one of the reasons for accepting Christ and becoming a Christian, because it is not in harmony with the true teachings of the Bible. Again, such a theory involves the idea that God is a being that will relentlessly punish from generation to generation for six thousand years the descendants of a man that happens, or chooses, if you prefer, to be disobedient in one instance, still causing the death of our loved ones, breeding sickness, pain, wars, and all the evils to which man is subject. Oh, monstrous doctrine is such as that. This cannot be a Christian's God. Such a theory is repulsive to the very thought of love, which is the essential feature of God's character, and must be.

Third. Acceptable worship must be predicated on love and duty. How beautifully blended are these features worked out in all

that Jesus did in His ministry while upon the earth. He tells Peter He prayed for him when He informed him that Satan desired to sift him like wheat. Not a poor, afflicted specimen of humanity came to Him for relief but what met with a responsive chord of sympathy in Jesus. No ordeal of pains, indignities or humility, but what was endured, all that He should be a fit example by which and through which to inspire His followers to forsake self service and look to Him only as the Model after which pattern they are to fashion their lives in all they do, or leave undone.

Whether you avail yourself of the opportunities given to you while in this life, I trust that what is here written may lead to a fuller and fairer investigation of the real truths of the Word of God as revealed to us in His Word, the Holy Bible.